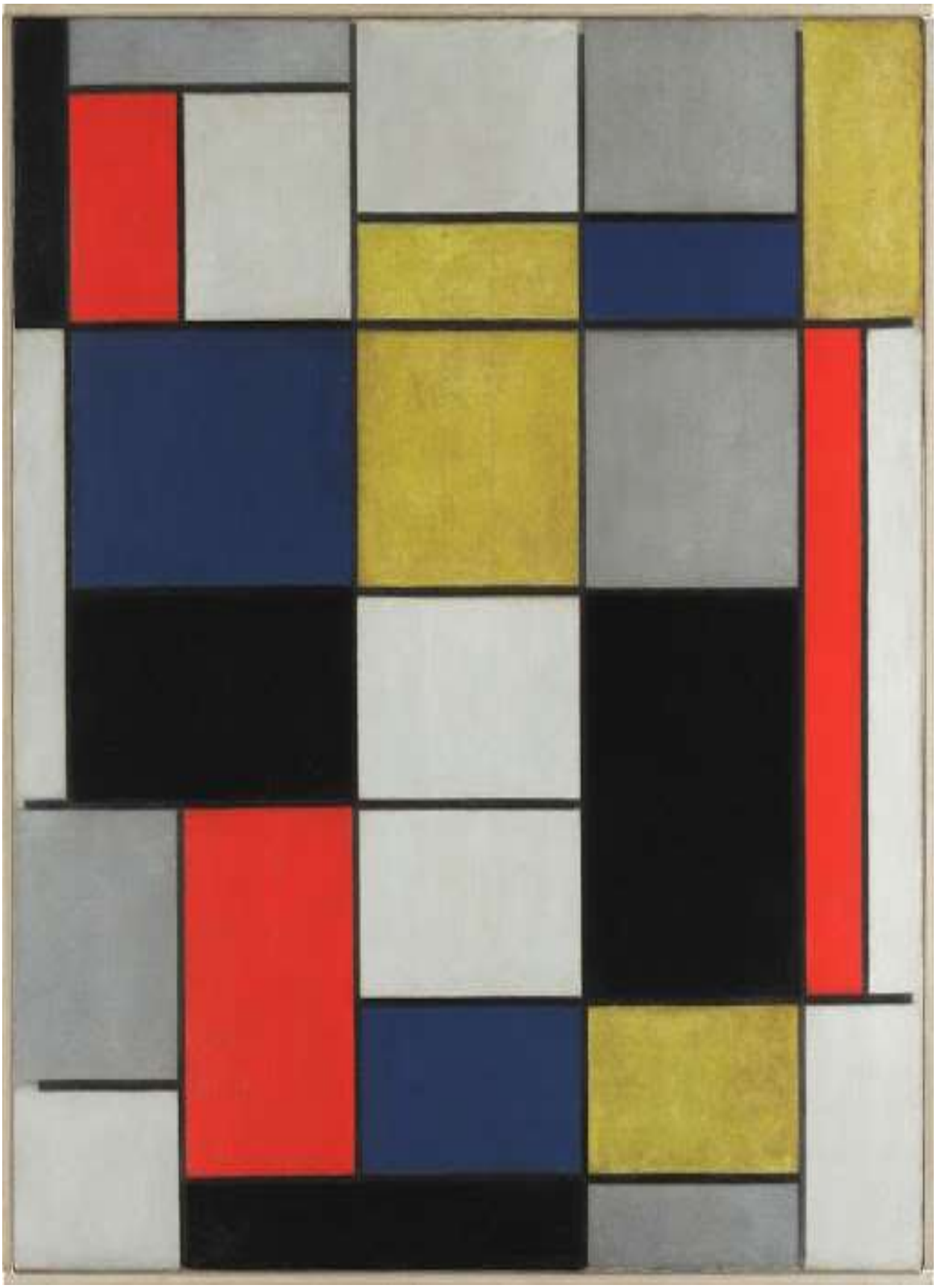

Deep Wood's Woven Shade:

Apparition Poems 2024

Adam Fieled

Cover by Piet Mondrian
Composition A, 1923
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I. Apparition Poems

#1652

You could ask, is love just
one level among levels, and
I would say this: you put me
on a level where the streams
that cross between us are all
I have, and I accept, Julia.
And when I tell you, bent
back like something stiff as
it becomes malleable (branches,
flowers) that I adore you, I mean
to say that I use your name here,
use an "I" that is an I, and its
naïve, it is, but also OK, fits—

#1338

Was it God & reality in West Philly? An apogee,
certainly, but you wonder, over expanses of stale
time, what you wonder. Youth, vivaciousness, even
being or seeming sybaritic— is that it, the secret, key
to levitational bliss (whether just stumbled into or no),

something bequeathed to the human race to partake of,
if they dare, if the sensibility is there to do so, real love,
our isle in the water, portal into underwater heaven—
or did we trod the boards beside our pal Peter Pan?
She was always there, always with us, the trio generated

an energy field potent enough to knock over everyone
in the house. We were the real ones. That's the wonder
of it. Except to say that the catastrophes visited on her,
and us, later, shade the whole enterprise of our ascendency
in that house, darkly, even as I attempt a palimpsest over

said catastrophes against the Hog-World which created
them, specifically to screw us specifically in the ass.
Then it's back to the beginning, youth, drugs, lustiness,
as the realer real. As is, also, dangerous, as she is, who
took the entire enterprise and went sublime. Evidence?

#1481

"Here's a game between love
and death, articulated in words,
gestures, attitudes, curves,
what comes into people's circles
when they curve things, I always
find myself unsheathing many
swords, dueling, thrusting every
point which in perspective seems obvious—
if the opponents are canvas…"

If the opponents are canvas,
you might as well thrust into thin
air, I wanted to tell her, it's been
raw you don't realize the literal
nature of the canvas, or the nothing
impasto past it, as what the past is—

#2028

If I were to mention, to her,
the word itself, *decolletage*,
and if she really were a demon,
don't you think it reasonable
that the demoness, were she
to deflate, might have no words
right back…would just repeat,
to herself, *decolletage*, all night?

#2041

A quarter of a century
has passed
since I took the teenage
townie to a new place
transgressive
in a subletted room
on West Nittany
if I have no regrets
it's because those piles

on that carpeted floor
have passed into
ink somewhere
past that room—
she has too.
the second phase of the game.

#2047

I have written
the poems
that were in the icebox
and which you were probably
hoping to power-block
forgive me
they are delicious
so sweet
and so cold

#1344

That there should be bodies
strewn across every road is an
axiom only applying to roads
worth crossing— I shift in my
checkered flannel, as lumps of
hair, flesh, piss, feces, semen
and blood pile like moss and fern under
me. That this should be me over
others who gets to cross this road
is a mystery I leave to the sided crosses.

#1614

Set him in place: the Creator of the Universe.
For whatever reason Abraham might experience
a sense of being called, let's say that Abraham
is correct. The call is there, or was made. Since
the Creator of the Universe is a God, not a man,
what the query would be, or consist of, does begin
from the grounds of perfect truthfulness, immaculate
sagacity, consummate insight. I no longer believe
the Creator would call for Isaac's death. In my not
consummate imagination, which also cannot believe

human sagacity may achieve perfection, it nonetheless seems
the Creator has another question for Abraham to answer.
The incision is: Abraham is asked to prove, demonstrate, that
Isaac is really his son. How is he really your son? The dream
of family, among the human race, as a veil of Maya, at least
sometimes, is clouded by shrouds placed on reality, fatty
degeneration of surface tissue, the ancient quality of souls
lost in people thrown around. The Creator— conscious,
unconscious, personal, impersonal— is not looking for
blood. Why would he? Dumb for the Creator to ask for.

What the Creator wants is simply the truth manned
beneath the surface, what's perfectly there. Does Abraham?

#1616

The God who would have Isaac killed, you
might discover, was a pimp God. The administered
test, to Abraham, was a pimp test. The conscious,
personal portion of this God, creating illusions
of singularity, was initiating and completing a pimp
task. This, also, you might discover. What is past
our comprehension is there, too. What looks like
a pimp to us— who knows? But that the imposition
on Abraham pimps out something to Abraham—
a goomba-like, or pimpish, dispensation— this, you
need to know, is how it occurs to us that primordial
powers ooze their way up, into human consciousness—

or might, that is. You need to know and not know.
At the end, you judge that what they call God
is fashioned from human brains. That part is
simple. Myths stick or don't stick. Myths become
Gods-in-themselves: conscious, unconscious,
personal, impersonal. Myths are pimped out, too—

#2043

For God to be God
God has to be something else
the manifestation of a center point
of perfectly well-rounded goodness
incorrigibly manning the ambiguous
affirming all sides of every equation
responsive both personally, impersonally
conscious and unconscious

but then, being there and not somewhere else
the Ontological Argument falls flat
God's not God
for God to be God

#2044

What if, really & truly,
the God that made us
was beneath us? What if
we emerged from ooze,
call it primordial, that was
itself a matrix for an eternity
of half-made garbage, and one
millennium, the entire universe
just slipped out— an accident?
There we were, all of us, at 1.0,
those elite-brained imposing
spatial-temporal dimensions
on time, space. Pygmies, also,
pushed down towards tiny
existences, hating 1.0 very much,
as an enemy like taxes, always there—

#1618

Can we imagine an Abraham not perpendicular,
stalemated, half-assed? Let's assume this: God's
challenge, as I have configured it, is to justify
patrilineage. How is Isaac your son? So: who do we

imagine Abraham to be? Let's say he's for real.
Words which could appear in Abraham's mouth:
Isaac's brain sprung from my brain, his thoughts continue
my thoughts, what backbone I have in me must inhere in him, too—

and so on. Must the confrontation end in banality?
The voice to transcendentalize this mythological
enterprise is Isaac's. If we don't know him, we know
nothing. That's what the original myth, essentially,

denies us. The myth, in other words, both this version
and its canonized companion, ends before it gets real.
The didacticism of mythology, always imposing,
grants Isaac the voice to say just one thing, in this

assembled, perpendicular, stalemated, half-assed
matrix— *I am that I am: in that, let there be light*.

#1176

Love, hung up like a Calder mobile,
in open air; swung close to statues of
goddesses; meshed into marble stairs;
this is how my vision of the future
takes form, and where. Philadelphia Museum
of Art, as universe-vessel. All the loveless
shit-bombs escorted from the place,
back to Nothing World, so that they
might lament anything which could look
too real emanating from their pale pigsty,
mortality-talismans hung as their hands.
Squeals and oinks make hopeless demands.
I tell all the bullshit artists, "do what you
want," because that's what they can't do;
sit in a haunted room punching out lines to
create bright darkness. It always occurs to me
cleanliness of mind is hard to come by, and if
you don't have it, it could be better to be
dead, dropped in ice— or shot dead by Diana—

#2029

My life, I narrated to Alexa,
couldn't be any less like
The Moon and Sixpence
if I painted the walls a garish
tint of jungle green. Then, I
realized (oops!) I did just
paint my walls a garish tint
of jungle green. And there was
a model on the divan.

A model train, that is.

#1323

As dawn breaks out in
a world of darkness, I

take risks to get you, I
put you on to games of

this kind, all this means
is that this is strong tea,

be careful, it could go to
your head, it congeals in

oracles, word after word,
place it where it belongs,

where gushes of wandering
water always go, home—

#530

A poet's spirit is
seldom blithe. I see
briars perched, as you
did, always to get stuck
in, and always to make us
red leaves. Jagged pieces
of colored glass are us,
too, ourselves, as we skylark—

hydroplaning on Shelley's reign

#2034

"I" looks for "you"
all over the fucking
place, and if "I" can't
find "you" he'll just
pretend he did, and,
y'know, start making
up stuff. That's the
chautauqua for the night
on the non-objectivity
of poetry, said Caligula,

leaning into a hump-back
purchased on the Boulevard.

#1346

The righteous man or woman, God or Goddess,
who bears seeds to open spaces, knows, regardless
of prejudice, this: a sin is no sin if it's all you have
in you. What's in us, the human race, is what's had,
what's real, what we are. There's no sense planting
against what's real. The idealist coughs, panting
after the oblivion of the fictitious. Our relevant particular
is L-shaped, compounded of one big perpendicular—
us, what's real, what we are. Endless tug of war.
They've got the numbers, we've got the swords—
it was all in a nod, third-party directed, to take
him in, question him, let someone else remake
his brains, while the L-shaped fiasco's replanted.
Happy to be real when armed, happy to be pedantic.

#1351

Once you learn the L, what it implies—
a stalemated race— the sky, clouds inhering,
bodies of water, stately mountains, grass,
the entire nine yards of it, all bent
into form as something humiliatingly past
your comprehension— then the L again,
what the human brain could be if not
plagued by child-like, rock/hard place conditions—

mountains, perhaps it's the mountains
which move you the most, as words wind
their way into place, because a mountain
is what you most want to make, something
immovable, permanent, durable, solid,
something on your side of things, against
the other, which receives your ricochet,
waits to chop you, your mountain down to pebbles—

II. The Kanzler Saga

#1114

Someone's all mastery against death,
shoveled back from a grave onto South
Street, so loose, germane I'm breathless—
the heady end of a drunken drought.
Right. But take that twenty years further,
the drought is more profound, years pile
up, stasis asserts its presence, as does murder,
as does the intrusion of the common, the vile.
Correct. At the end of the tunnel, either
choose to continue or no, as though it's another
misnomer this means anything, deeper
as it is in time past, time lost, time under.
It was so very real— all colors, thunder.
I'm lost in her funhouse of finder's, keepers.

#1347

Because women who paint have two bodies,
the fragile blood/flesh vessel common, normed,
to all, and an aggregate of coalesced colors and forms,
extending residue useful to raise brains past models,
the winter day arose I plumbed the depths (for a random
reason) of my files, found a miracle, ten paintings,
all master class, by her, without understanding how
I'd mislaid them a decade before. But there, in that now,
I found her body again, the first stroked into
the second, and it was a revelation past anything but

the most violently revelatory intercourse possible
between two human beings. Honestly, not hostile
but real, our more literal expression had wobbled
on skittish rails towards the noncommittal or gossamer.
But as she left it for real, her physical body, in coalesced
colors and forms, the retrieval was all intercourse elevated
into matrimony usually thought too good for the human
race. It is, actually. Especially given the work's twists
and turns towards revealing again all this dullness
we cycle in. Four bodies must suffice, to turn dullness to fullness.

#1181

I.
Just as to paint, for you, was to vandalize, I had
the instinct to vandalize you, my love. To rough
you up. Because for you there could be no love,
I would assist you in a realization— repercussions
could follow from conquests you found fun.
How your green eyes had a problem— you gawked
at things too long. That wide-eyed stare, made it
so that (for example) no one could take you seriously
as swish at a first night. Or on First Fridays, as you
tried to swish towards a homing sense you were going
where you wanted to, your simian male friend at your
side. As I said, I wanted to rough you up. You could
never paint to be crisp, only smudged, so that Abby laughed
at how hard you worked to convey retardation— and (she cracked) succeeded!

II.
I could never decide if, behind the wide-eyed wall,
what was there had any genuine innocence. It seemed
to me, to be honest, there was none. Your sense
of complete calculatedness in every respect is why,
how I now kneel before you, my round browns mingling
with your round greens, brown and green smudging each
other to determine advantages, now that the first nights,
First Fridays are all part of a folded past, the time's come
to choose whether to live or die. I've decided to salvage
us. That's crisp in me. You were crisp about the bed
part of it, for a while, so that I force red into your mix— no pictures.

#2040

Where metaphors become themselves, put
the pedal to the metal, I want to be the one
not riding bitch on the plush-lined vessel's
back seat, so that I generate (from tension!)
new metaphors also putting their pedal to the metal.
The car I'm speaking of is Noah's Ark, I'm the one
that got everything in there— it would have to be,
because she chose to paint kids playing King of the Hill,
because our brains did King of the Hill games back
and forth, years after all the fucking was finished,

because calculation was not foreign to the situation
on her side, so that I carry the all, the everything she is—
rich, recondite, multifariously about intelligence
or retardation, depending on her mood, green eyes
knowing the me past me that she's counting on—
in the Ark, which must be a car to stunt it, in wonted
fashion. Perhaps even a jalopy. She knows me past me,
is herself a man, a king, past what was between her legs,
which I thought I found interesting past calculation,
because she set up a car-pool there I'd circle for, & I did—

#1348

Stumbling, like an inverted Dadaist, down the road
towards logical absurdity, eternity takes misty rain form,
drops a question in your path. So, seeds being sown,
women (and men!) painters have two bodies, as has been normed,
ascertained fully. Right? But that the body left of
coalesced colors and forms should be a woman's body—
why? Who's left to determine that this should be
the case, or how it is the case, or what right should be
given to anyone to make such distinction? Why it is
that a woman should create a second woman— the "I"

which created it (her) being seen to be indecipherable, if
the work holds fast— there is no recourse to anything
but urinals, bicycle wheels, shades of *international blue*.
More stumbling. Surely every worthy human eye recreates
the body as fully as is that eye's capacity, gender penned
in as each image is seen, differently every time. What the event
is, no, but what the thing is in-itself, becomes conditioned,
created and recreated, hung on myriad perception filters
as it is, if it's real, and holds fast to some agreeable center against
also agreed upon obsolescence. Stumbles, wheels sexually, an inverted Dadaist.

#665

Is it pure rapacity, that part of me
I set aside to dance when the scene
is a dance scene? *It's not pure anything,*
she said, it's dirty (we have matching
guilts for our beds), if you mishandle me
I'll make sure you pay a price. I looked
into her eyes, hands in hers— *alright*, she
said, *I've got your moves*. If it is to be
dancing, let's do it with complete cognizance
that just as we know art about sex, we
know sex about art— *that's what this is,*

she said, *sex about art*. I could paint you
a picture of what happened next, except
I forgot, in all the impasto, to record
the composition the right way. Let's hope
somewhere she left the right kind of drawing—
if it's all in her innards, pictured: so much the better.

#1344

Close to God as two libertines could leap—
Powelton Village, huge high ceiling co-op,
us, there, making love as though it were normal,
which it was not— not the breezy ease of it,
around the chaise lounge, not the wholesome
rolling. They would make us pay, they did,
what we would get would come to us slowly,
or not at all, as we ourselves came fast, that time,
I remember, jump-started by the sudden heat
after a cold walk. Your insides salivated at expressing
that much creature comfort at once, against all
the stuntedness you usually expressed. I was dressed,
still, mostly. It would be the layaway plan for us,
for the art, the sweet part. This part, this crescendo
memory would have to suffice in itself to redeem all the winter
nights with no heat, no love, no romance, no sex—
in Powelton Village, off wheels, undressed—

#1349

What the test was, no one needs to know.
But the test was administered, with extreme
unction towards it being proven to her, shown,
I could be relied upon to hold my own,
in circumstances tempting me to loosen a hold
on reality, which could withstand sacrifice.
Thus, it, I, would be able to carry images where I
would need to take them. Our bodies the vehicle,
she was masterful. The tension was fake— treacle.
She laid it on thick. Just in the nick of time, I
dissevered the bond. The just war was then fit.
The joke is that the marriage consummation is this.
This, here, now, all flesh bonds dissevered, into
the Platonism of the fleshliness of images,
this, where what's born into being, colors mixed
purely, all serves to further tensions released, clean.

#1474

If you make it, once, to an isle in the water,
assuming the presence of a worthy she or her,
what two bodies can do becomes the issue,
whether you can join a continuum, with she or her,
of what the lake, leaves, shore-sand and the rest
participate in by their existence, hyperreal, the best
continuum two human beings can join, were
you to mean it as much, take umbrage with death,

overlay yourselves on a menagerie of elements
beyond your comprehension. Maybe, then, if you
make it, your life becomes testimony to something
more than ritual dances; a realm of no shyness,
in which your body was, once, what it was meant
to be; in the final count: the only way we're meant.

#1475

The term which bloomed in my addled
head, *pure peace profound*, as the tableaux
completed itself, I'd read in an esoteric
text. There it was, *pure peace profound*, yet
it would take twenty much more icy years
to understand why and how Hannah could
act as such a tonic to a largely niggling
universe. In doing so, the Goddess she
was, addled herself with agendas, away
from anything holy, led my body to a safe

haven for the rest of my life. A sense, also,
how *pure peace profound* means more than momentary
levitation. It means not merely the water-isle
occupied, but the conscience-stung cessation
of shallow-water dances— dancers in shallow
waters, also, conscience-stung, if they won't
vacate the isle at a convenient time— God
or godliness stung, if it's a moralizing God—
deep water, endlessly replenished within itself,
just because two-who-were-one were precisely that—

#1362

The nights that were ours,
were what they were. Not
too many. Violent. Violent
about disguises worn, violent
about mystifications, also about
a deep desire you had (I was only
too eager to fulfill) to be decimated,
to be ripped to shreds. I will not
now play wizard, pretend to know
what must remain unknown. But I
see it again— *Bethesda*— as we
both knew it. Charnel ground it
was, where the individual counted
for less than nothing. Games, more
games. Wheels, friction, pushes
towards decimation, obliteration
of both of us. The ride you wanted
is the ride you got. Two livid bodies
caught on something much larger
than themselves. Climaxes completely
calamitous. Or constipated ones.
Whatever. You had arrows to shoot,
too. My hands gripped your ass as
you rode me, to make sure we both
died completely. The world as friction.

#1183

See the isle in the water, as you would, as a syndrome,
sold as something solid to aspire to— however an "I"
might be in a "you," sexually— mostly illusion, tomfoolery to think
it really could be actual, that "I" in "you" communes
with celestial spheres, sprinkles on celestial seasonings.
Mostly grist for aggravating wheels, against the actual.

I tend to think, in retrospect, this is why you could never
be earnest when you painted. Everything perversion,
warpage, distortion, nothing to explain why that urge,
towards the isle, was in you, as in so many others,
so that how you related to your body was conventional.
The ride, through lake-water, to the isle, thus

forced, for you, such a sense of compartmentalization,
mere pain, as I imagine, does not begin to describe it.
Yet the journey had to be made. Even as it was,
placed in your soul & brain where it could never be
expressed. It would languish forever as privatized.
Even as, also, Nature's eyes must have seen you clearly,

made real, built the way a woman is, privatized, only partially—

#1177

Eyes of women who paint
grow bulbous with desire
when they light upon things
that strike them in profile;
they want them restyled
in color, to encompass their
contours, stroke slowly into
them, watch, watch, watch,

until the seen things settle into
their grasp like marble gods,
not recondite, represented finally,
finished off by fingers, put
into organically organized places,
perspectives rhythmic around—

#1352

I.
What's in what eyes?
What I see in hers is
mixed greenish silence,
somewhat garish,
past girlish (not much),
but I can't touch her
flesh (set to self-destruct),
anymore than she can
understand the book
her cunt is, that no one
reads directly, or speaks
of, there's no love other
than "could be," but I
think of her throat cut—
that's her slice of smut.

II.
Then, there was this—
the creepy sense that it
had all been nothing
to her (everything being
nothing, no one being
anyone, nothing being
anything), and that she
had her own set of
spiders (exquisite or
not) to cast out into
the world to do her
bidding, so that betrayal
was never far from her
blood-rotted, starvation-
besotted, pistol-plotted
mind. And so it was.
That slightly nauseous
green, her paint insignia,
was in her aura, too,
so that blooms of youth
became lands of the dead,
and her domain was as
much visionary deadness
as mine, yet ready to do
real, nauseous, disastrous
evil in the world. I don't know why.

#1353

It can't be real— or, you
can't be real to them— not
a real guy, girl, artist, seer,
visionary, shaman, quester,
requester, you can't be anything
at all— all because what they
build, they build only that they
might tear down— now, I take
back and play backwards all that
happened between us, because
it seems to me that's what you
would want, like what music
sounds like played in reverse,
spooky, woozy, semi-anti-sublime,
not earnest, right? Us, just us. Inverted.

#1360

Another zinger to recover from—
it's all tangles. I can't write about
you with any limpid clarity at all.
At the hinge I could be limpid,
impediments block me on all sides
from proceeding. The only point
of true limpidity is that the discovery
of ten stray-yet-astonishing paintings
in my files, with only me to present
them to the world, left me in a quandary
where you had to be dealt with all over
again, from now (a surprising now we
might not have considered then), and promptly.

The tangles of who you were, who we were,
things I thought would be minor turning
major on me, and vice versa, can only resolve
in the idea that I was as conjugal with you
as a man could be. The Earth has never
seen an Eve as uproariously perverse as you
were then. Briefly. And with something to lose.
But the surprising now dictates that this
I have, words, are yours, yours forever, green
taken from your eyes, canvases, seeded
straight up, in earnest, which you weren't. Agreed?

#1361

You can take for granted: if I
have my way, the ride you wanted
is the ride you'll get. This is the stint
where you earn your keep by doing,
creating something indispensable.
Where, also, it must be admitted
(no way out) that some people
are special over others. As the pigs
of the world (Maryland) wince, I notice that
your work is full of tricks, daring
viewers (even serious ones) to take
things lightly. But here it's coloration,
here it's composition, here it's killer
narrativity: always a reason which
justifies the idea that you're
more earnest than you look. I, too,
am learning. The child in you,
the septuagenarian— indispensable.
Your paintings— entire rides in a row,
toddler's heads lined up to show
how the world smudged you— glow.

#1350

The bitter mystery moment of love— all that
tossing, turning, rocking, rolling, hypersensitivity,
painful tenderness, grievous jealousy, beginnings,
how it shapes up at the start— even the ecstasy,
the exuberance of it— passes swiftly. Someone has
burrowed beneath your flesh, remained there. That's
it— the bitter mystery. The mystery is more profound,
how given a durational expanse, all the rollicking sounds
beget what they beget. What it meant to be you, what it
meant for you to assimilate the Other (as the Other's own
mystery can only emerge in stern, slow-burn time), what
the illusions, equations, conjunctions were, also what
of it remains densely woven, like the deep wood's woven
shade, enough to last, thus wear a white crown of radiance—

#1660

The miracle of it, or the proven heft of it which moves
us with or to the right sense of cosmic tininess—
dancing silver sandalled on the sea— that is, reflecting
(being) starlight on the surface of a vast, cohesive being,
well past human comprehension, which reflects
back to human consciousness infinity, eternity,
boundlessness, spaciousness to an extreme degree—
in that sense of just being a reflection, tininess
moves in, makes the important score against
self-importance, ourselves— *dancing silver sandalled
on the sea*— I cannot not make an apostrophe to
you, that all the cohesiveness, eternity, infinity
denied to us, in halves, quarters, even less, is now
paid back to us in sea. We wade into the waves, free.

F

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